



United States Mint Makes History with Display of Ten 1933 Double Eagles

August 16, 2006

Nation Views Rare Gold Pieces for First Time in Denver

DENVER — The United States Mint unveiled with a flourish today ten recently recovered 1933 Double Eagles at the Opening Ceremony of the American Numismatic Association's World's Fair of Money® in Denver. The United States Mint has secured the rare gold pieces at Fort Knox until now.

The unveiling by United States Treasurer Anna Escobedo Cabral and Acting United States Mint Director David A. Lebryk marked the first time the United States Mint has put the historic artifacts on display for their owners, the American people. The four-day exhibition of these national treasures is open to the public, and admission is free.

"The 1933 Double Eagles are fascinating because they should not exist," said Acting Director Lebryk. "These gold pieces were never issued as coinage and should never have left the United States Mint at Philadelphia, because we were ordered to melt them down. But these ten gold pieces were illegally spirited away. We are pleased to have recovered them and to exhibit them now for the American people."

About 445,500 Double Eagle gold pieces were minted in 1933. However, President Franklin Roosevelt took the United States off the gold standard that year in an effort to help the struggling American economy recover from the Great Depression. As a result, all but two of the 1933 Double Eagles were ordered destroyed. Those two specimens were transferred to the Smithsonian Institution. None of the Double Eagles was issued at that time.

The United States Government has now recovered a total of twenty 1933 Double Eagles that were stolen from the United States Mint at Philadelphia. Nine of the 20 Double Eagles were seized by, or relinquished to, the Secret Service in the 1940s and 1950s, and were subsequently returned to the United States Mint and destroyed.

One 1933 Double Eagle surfaced in 1996 and was recovered by the United States Secret Service. Following a legal settlement, that gold piece was returned to the United States Mint and was subsequently issued and auctioned in New York City to an anonymous buyer for \$7.5 million on July 30, 2002. The United States Department of the Treasury has said that it does not intend to monetize, issue, auction, or destroy the 10 recently recovered 1933 Double Eagles.

The United States Mint's Eagle gold coin was first produced in 1795 with a \$10 denomination. When the United States Mint first struck \$20 gold pieces, they were popularly called "Double Eagles."

The 1933 Double Eagle obverse features "Liberty," a figure reminiscent of a Greek goddess. The image was designed by famed sculptor Augustus Saint-Gaudens. The reverse features a majestic eagle.

The United States Mint, the world's largest coin manufacturer, produces about 13 billion coins annually for trade and commerce, and also makes coins for collectors and investors.

[Click here for digital photographs of the 10 recovered 1933 Double Eagles.](#)

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